

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 8, 2010**

Prepared on June 6, 2010

**ITEM NUMBER: 11**

**SUBJECT: Limited Term Renewal of the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Order No. R3-2010-0040)**

**DISCUSSION**

The Central Coast Water Board adopted the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Agricultural Order No. R3-2004-0117) on July 9, 2004, that contains conditions to assure that discharges of waste from farming operations are regulated to protect water quality through implementation of appropriate management measures. Water Code section 13269 limits the length of a waiver of waste discharge requirements to five years, unless renewed. On July 10, 2009, the Central Coast Water Board extended the Agricultural Order to provide an additional year for review and revision, with the intention of adopting an updated Agricultural Order by July 10, 2010 (Order R3-2009-0050). Staff proposes that the Water Board renew the existing Agricultural Order for a term of 18 months to allow sufficient time to consider an update to that Order.

On February 1, 2010, staff released preliminary draft staff recommendations for an updated Agricultural Order. The intent of this early public release was to provide interested persons insight into staff's considerations to address discharges of waste associated with irrigated agriculture, including assuring compliance with the Central Coast Water Board's legal obligations while taking into account diverse stakeholder interests. At that time, the Central Coast Water Board also invited stakeholders to submit comments and/or alternatives to the preliminary draft staff recommendations. Currently, staff is completing the review of comments and alternatives submitted and needs more time to address the issues and develop a comprehensive draft Order for Board consideration. Since the existing Order expires in July 2010, staff is proposing that the Central Coast Water Board renew the existing Order "as is" for 18 months, until December 2011. Staff will continue to engage in a public process, evaluate the relevant issues and will bring a comprehensive draft Order to the Board for consideration as soon as possible (before December 2011).

The only issue before the Central Coast Water Board relative to this item is staff's proposal to renew the existing Irrigated Agricultural Order, with no changes except for the expiration date, for 18 months. This staff report does not discuss the various issues related to the more comprehensive update to the existing Agricultural Order that staff will present to the Water Board on or before December 2011. Item 12 of the agenda also relates to the Agricultural Order Renewal. That item is a continuation of the May 12<sup>th</sup> Board Workshop to

provide additional opportunity for public comment on the preliminary draft staff recommendations for an updated Agricultural Order.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Central Coast Water Board renew the existing Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands for 18 months, through December 2011 (Order No. R3-2010-0040). Staff proposes no changes to the Order, except for the expiration date, as part of this action. Staff will continue to work on the relevant issues and will bring a new, comprehensive draft Irrigated Ag Order to the Board for consideration as soon as possible, on or before December 2011.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, Order No. R3-2010-0040